

WHAT STYLE HOUSE IS THAT?

Recognizing House Styles in the Rowley Historic District



First Period: 1625-1725

New England's first colonists built houses that were adaptations of English domestic buildings. Generally one room deep and two stories high with single large, central chimneys, they had steeply pitched roofs to shed the snow and were clad in unpainted wood clapboards or shingles. Because glass was scarce and expensive, window openings were small, few in number, and in the most primitive, windows were fixed or casement style with diamond-shaped leaded panes. Doors were batten (constructed of vertical boards).

Georgian 1720-1780

Georgian architecture gets its name from the succession of English kings named George (beginning in 1715). In the United States the style included innumerable variations on a simple English theme: a symmetrical, two-story house with center-entry façade, combined with the two-room-deep center-passage floor plan. By the end of the seventeenth century, the upper classes in the colonies began to embrace the European concept of gentility, displaying their elevated taste and station by maintaining codes of dress, speech, and behavior. This status was also aptly displayed by the orderly symmetry of Georgian architecture, a legacy that survives today.



Federal 1780-1820

The Federal style is often described as a refinement of Georgian style drawing on contemporary European trends, in particular the work of Robert Adam (1728-1792), who traveled to the Mediterranean to study classical Roman and Greek monuments. His architecture was based on first-hand observation rather than interpreted through buildings of the Italian Renaissance. During this period, the first true architects appeared on the American scene. Among them was Charles Bulfinch (1763-1844) who is credited with bringing the Federal style to United States after his own European tour., and Samuel McIntire (Salem, Massachusetts),





Greek Revival: 1825-1860

Increasing interest in classical buildings in both western Europe and the United States at the end of the eighteenth century, Archaeological investigations of the early nineteenth century focused on Greece (as the mother of Rome) and shifted interest to Grecian architectural models. At the same time, the War of 1812 increased American resentments of British influence. These factors led to a flowering of what is now known as Greek Revival architecture. In New England and the northern United States, the side-passage, gable-front house was introduced. Vernacular examples abound,

The Second Empire 1855-1885

or French Second Empire) style was considered to be the modern fashion of the late nineteenth century, mimicking the latest French building styles. Its distinctive mansard roof Houses in the Second Empire style are essentially defined by this distinctive roof type, with other detailing reflecting a number of different fashions (most commonly Italianate details) or even a combination of several different styles. The second empire style was used for many public buildings during the Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877) and is therefore sometimes referred to



Queen Anne: 1880-1910

The standard for domestic architecture during the Victorian era in the United States, the Queen Anne style is difficult to define, encompassing a wide range of architectural elements and borrowing and combining features from multiple stylistic traditions. The initial inspiration came from England, but developed into something uniquely American. During the second half of the nineteenth century. The American Architect and Building News, and in new plan books available by mail order nationwide. Advancing technology also played a role in spreading the Queen Anne style across the country, with pre-cut architectural details readily available and affordable thanks to mass-production and railway distribution.